

Borough District of Drogheda - July 2021

Minutes of the Meeting of the Borough District of Drogheda held via MS Teams, hosted from the Chamber, County Hall, Dundalk on Monday 5th July 2021 at 4.15 p.m.

In attendance:

Mayor: Cllr. James Byrne - Present in Chamber

Members: Attended Remotely: Councillors Joanna Byrne, Kevin Callan, Tom Cunningham, Michelle Hall, Fiachra Mac Raghnaill, Paddy McQuillan, Declan Power, Pio Smith, Eileen Tully

Officials: Gráinne Tuomey, Meetings Administrator - Present in Chamber
Paddy Donnelly, Director of Services - Present in Chamber
Emma Eaton, Staff Officer - Present in Chamber
Mark Johnson, Senior Engineer - Remote
John Lawrence, Senior Executive Officer - Remote
Gerard McCormack, Assistant Engineer - Remote
Brian Brooks, A/Executive Engineer - Remote
Aideen Morrissey, Public Realm Designer - Remote
Colette Moss, Senior Executive Officer - Remote

Minute No. 72/21

Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Meeting held on Monday 14th June 2021 were confirmed on the proposal of Cllr. Pio Smith and seconded by Cllr. Michelle Hall.

The minutes of the Ordinary Monthly Meeting held on Monday 14th June 2021 were confirmed on the proposal of Cllr. Kevin Callan and seconded by Cllr. Michelle Hall.

Minute No. 73/21

Matters Arising

- None Stated

Minute No. 74/21

Housing Progress Report

Members discussed the report as circulated at the meeting. Director of Services, Paddy Donnelly addressed all matters raised by the Members. Housing was complimented on their efforts at securing properties under CPO and Director of Services Joe McGuinness was noted as instrumental in setting this up by Paddy Donnelly.

The following matters were highlighted:

- The cessation of the moratorium on evictions generating a spike in homeless figures was disputed

- It was acknowledged that the preference of persons who found themselves homeless was to remain in their previous home area which was a challenge
- Housing will look at increasing the amount of photos on the Choice Based Letting site
- All houses let meet private rented standards but on a couple of occasions houses had been let before snagging was fully signed off
- Issues at 42 Marley Park will be looked at and Boice Court update sought.

Minute No. 75/21

Operations and Marine Progress Report

Members discussed the report as circulated at the meeting.
Mark Johnson, Senior Engineer addressed all Operations Matters raised.

The following was noted:

- Operations may consider leasing more land for pop up car parks if necessary next year.
- An Arts work scheme will be considered to tackle graffiti – talk to BIDs
- Operations offered to provide Graffiti Report for September Meeting.
- Road Works programme started; each item on list will be progressed, may need to wait turn.
- €125,000 anti litter initiative fund can be spent on big belly bins, servicing & maintaining areas.
- Marley's Court behind gate - clean up will be considered.
- Gully Clean up contractor due to commence.
- Mechanical Weed puller can be deployed where necessary.
- *Pearse Park car park spaces impeding traffic at junction to be looked at.

*Cllr. Pio Smith was previously advised car park changes could not be made to Pearse Park, if it can now be done he requested a reason to be given to the response that previously issued.

The following non-operation items were clarified:

Wall at Mount Sandford/College Rise - Members told nothing was going to be done - A request was made for this response in writing by Cllr. Pio Smith. Wall cited as Dangerous Structure in public area.

Cllr. James Byrne requested that when contractors for any section carry out road works that requirement is to reinstate area as before and cited missing bollards and fencing on previous work schemes.

Minute No. 76/21

Taking in Charge Report

Gerry McCormack, Assistant Engineer, introduced himself to Members as the newly assigned staff member dealing with Taking in Charge. Gerry advised that he had worked on Taking in Charge previously, was regularly meeting his predecessor James Searson so was getting up to date with items quickly.

Members discussed the report as circulated at the meeting and the following items were clarified:

- Gerry McCormack meeting Irish Water the following week on Bishops Court and other developments requiring IW work before being taken in charge.
- Liscorrie Housing Estate sewage issues up to developer to resolve.

Minute No. 77/21

Chief Executive's Report on the Part 8 for Peter's Hill, Drogheda

Members welcomed the report as circulated and commended the addition the works will make towards enhancing tourism. A suggestion was made that the Drogheda 800 memorial stone be moved from Fair Street yard into the Peter's Hill area so it can be viewed and enjoyed by more people.

Cllr. Kevin Callan proposed that the CE Recommendation to proceed with works be agreed by Members, this was seconded by Cllr Pio Smith, and resolved.

Minute No. 78/21

Drogheda Allocation of Members Community Grants

To approve Members Community Grant Allocations as circulated with the agenda.

Proposed by: Cllr. Kevin Callan

Seconded by: Cllr. Pio Smith

And agreed.

Minute No. 79/21

Condolences

Mayor James Byrne advised Members that while this was not in the new Condolences Protocol the death of a serving Elected Member should be marked and gave Members the opportunity to speak about Cllr. Conlon who had died at the weekend.

Members remembered Cllr. Conlon, noting his great courage in attending meetings while ill, his sense of duty and connection to local community groups in Dunleer and his passion and dedication for Mid Louth. Sympathy was extended to his family and the greater community in the Dunleer area. This was reiterated by Director of Services Paddy Donnelly, both personally and on behalf of the Executive and Staff of Louth County Council, and he extended this sympathy to include Cllr. Conlon's siblings who are also prominent in community work in Dunleer.

A minutes silence was held in honour of Cllr. Hugh Conlon RIP.

Minute No. 80/21

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. Pio Smith

Seconded by: Cllr. Joanna Byrne

“Asking that the Local Authority cost the reconstruction of the Buttergate in Drogheda and explore the possibility of providing a tourist walking link from the Bus Depot via the Buttergate to Millmount.”

Reply from Mr. F. Pentony, Director of Services, Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development:

This costing assessment would be a job for a team consisting of a Grade I conservation architect, a conservation engineer, an archaeologist and a Quantity Surveyor. We do not have those specialisms within the council and they would need to be hired in to do this exercise. We do not currently have a budget for these works, so we would need to apply for and obtain external funding.

The Buttergate is considered to be a National Monument in the care or guardianship of the local authority. Any proposal to rebuild the Buttergate would require Ministerial Consent. It is possible that this would be achieved as there is photographic evidence of how it looked before its demolition in 1958.

The creation of a walking link would also require Ministerial Consent as it would require excavations through the line of the town wall, of which the Buttergate was a part.

Cllr. Pio Smith noting the reply that issued on this motion, advised that this could be used as a catalyst to link with and improve other tourist attractions. He suggested that this should be a long term goal of the Council. Cllr. Joanna Byrne queried if Ministerial approval of this scheme could be sought so that the scheme could be ready to go in the event of future funding being made available.

It was suggested that the area at the side be cleared in preparation as a first step.

Cllr. James Byrne advised that he had raised this with the Heritage Officer previously and the ownership of lands was unclear.

There being no other business, and as this was the last Municipal Meeting before the August holiday, the Mayor wished everyone a restful summer and the meeting concluded.

The Minutes were confirmed at a meeting of the Council held on:

Date: _____

Mayor: _____

Meeting Administrator: _____